**Special Olympics Iowa Program Report**

 **February 22, 2017**

**Area and Conference Basketball Competitions:**

The 11 Areas have completed Area Basketball Skills competitions and a total of 936 athletes participated. 398 of those athletes will compete at the Mid-Winter Tournament March 11. The four Conference Basketball Team competitions will be completed February 25th. There are 765 athletes (132 teams) from 69 delegations looking to advance to the Mid-Winter Tournament in (5 on 5) and (3 on 3) competitions.

**Unified Sport Training Days:**

The SW Unified Sport Training Day in Treynor and the NW Unified Sport Training Day in Cherokee are events in which the high school basketball and cheer teams work with the Special Olympics Iowa athletes to practice and improve their skills in basketball and cheerleading skills in preparation for Area and State competitions. These events are also used to recruit new Special Olympic athletes.

**Program Events held January through February 15th :**

Global Messenger Workshop- 35 participants

Oskaloosa Play Day- 43 participants

SW Area Bocce Tournament- 128 participants

Wartburg Unified Day- 64 participants

Upper Iowa Unified Day- 43 participants

**Class A, New Athlete and New Delegation Report for 2017:**

Class A credentials processed- 106 new, 54 renewal, 33 minors

New unique athletes- 12 North Region, 7 SE Region, 10 West Region for total of 29 athletes

13 new delegations

**Upcoming Program Events:**

 11 Area Spring Games and Swimming Competitions

FIT Program- March to Summer Games: The Sequel

Spread the Word to End the Word March 1, 2017 Capitol Building

Des Moines Challenge Day March 4, 2017 Ruby Van Meter School

NAIA National Basketball Tournament SO Clinic March 7, 2017 Sioux City

Mid-Winter Tournament March 10-11, 2017 Iowa City

Iowa Energy Special Olympics Night March 12, 2017 Des Moines

Harlan Coaches Training Clinic March 27, 2017 Harlan Middle School

Cedar Falls Challenge Day April 1, 2017 River Hills School

Cedar Rapids Play Day April 12, 2017 TBA

Ankeny Play Day April 20, 2017 Ankeny Centennial HS

University of Iowa Youth Games April 22, 2017 University of Iowa

Cornell Unified Day April 22, 2017 Mt Vernon

River Hills Play Day April 27, 2017 River Hills School

Drake University Unified Day May 4, 2017 Des Moines

Summer Games May 25-27, 2017 Iowa State University

**Coaches Sport Specific Training:**

Our Coaches Training Program is now available on line as we work to increase the number and quality of Certified Coaches in Special Olympics Iowa. PowerPoint Presentations/Quizes are available online at the Special Olympics Iowa website [www.soiowa.org](http://www.soiowa.org) under the “Become a Coach” link.

**Director of Sports & Advanced Competitions Report for the 02/21/2017 Board of Director Meeting**

**State Winter Games**

285 athletes & Unified Partners participated in the 31st SOIA Winter Games in January in Dubuque. Athletes competed in alpine skiing, cross country skiing, figure skating, snow shoeing and speed skating. Volunteers from Loras College, UNI, the University of Iowa, the University of Dubuque, Good Sam’s, Kiwanis and Leibfried & Associates assisted with the two day event. The Opening Ceremony was held along the Grand River Center walkway and patio. The Parade of Athletes was led by the Dubuque Drum and Bugle Corp. The Knights of Columbus provided an Honor Guard for the delegations. A torch lighting ceremony concluded the event. Other highlights included a dance with live music, a banquet and an aquatics pool party. Nancy Lagomarcino with Special Olympics, Inc. and two representatives from Microsoft attended the Winter Games. Photos of the SOIA Winter Games may be used in promotional material for the 2017 Special Olympics Winter World Games.

**Mid-Winter Tournament**

Preparations are underway for the March 10-11 event. Over 1,000 athletes will participate in the tournament. Athletes are training in basketball skills, team basketball, cheerleading, gymnastics and powerlifting.

**World Games**

Tabitha Darnell will leave on March 12 for the Washington DC area to connect with her Team USA teammates and coaches for the Special Olympics Winter World Games in Austria. Tabitha will participate in alpine skiing.